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22 October 1951

*Handwritten: This is replacement memo.*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Letter from the Honorable J. Edgar Hoover, Director,  
Federal Bureau of Investigation, dated 27 September 1951


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Certain general comments, however,  
can be made.

For more than a decade an outward appearance of unanimity has been maintained by the Politburo and it is, therefore, impossible to evaluate the various rumors of policy splits within this body. It is conceivable that a well-developed difference of opinion could exist over a protracted period, but regardless of whether Stalin "aligned" himself with the minority or majority, the split would always end at the moment when Stalin made his position known.

The Politburo is composed of individuals hand-picked by Stalin for both loyalty and ability, who owe their advancement to his favor alone and continue in office only under his sufferance. The best available reports on Politburo procedure indicate that, regardless of differences which may develop from the discussion of any problem, the matter is decided when Stalin renders final judgment. Stalin's word determines the party or governmental line, and the ranks are closed. Feuding cliques have never been tolerated by the Communist Party.

Malenkov undoubtedly is the most important individual under Stalin on Communist Party matters and perhaps on internal affairs in general; Molotov, however, appears to outrank all others on foreign policy. It is believed that in event of Stalin's death, Molotov would be his titular successor, probably ruling through a triumvirate of Malenkov, Beriya and himself, and that there would be no immediate drastic changes in policy.

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Class. Changed To: _____	
Auth: HQ 70-2	
Date: 25 JUL 1978	

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Memorandum for the Director

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Despite Malenkov's present stature, it is unlikely that any change of mind on his part would influence Stalin to the extent suggested by this report.

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KINGMAN DOUGLASS  
Assistant Director  
Current Intelligence

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